

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
30 June 2005 (30.06.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2005/059837 A1

(51) International Patent Classification⁷:
H04N 7/30

G06T 9/00,

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(21) International Application Number:

PCT/SE2004/001920

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(22) International Filing Date:

17 December 2004 (17.12.2004)

(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,
AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN,
CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI,
GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE,
KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD,
MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG,
PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM,
TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM,
ZW.

(25) Filing Language:

English

(26) Publication Language:

English

(30) Priority Data:

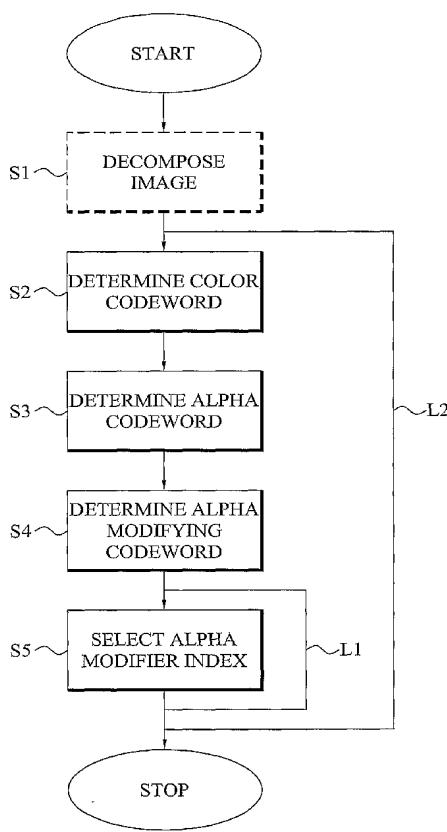
0303497-2 19 December 2003 (19.12.2003) SE
0401850-3 8 July 2004 (08.07.2004) SE

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(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH,
GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, TZ, UG, ZM,

{Continued on next page}

(54) Title: ALPHA IMAGE PROCESSING



(57) Abstract: An alpha image encoding and decoding scheme is disclosed. In the encoding an alpha image, is decomposed into image blocks (600) comprising multiple image element (610). The blocks (600) are compressed into block representations (700). A block representation (700) comprises at least a color codeword (710), an alpha codeword (720), an alpha modifying codeword (730) and a sequence (740) of alpha modifier indices. The color (710) and alpha (720) codeword (710) are representations of the colors and alpha value of the image elements (610) of the block (600), respectively. The alpha modifying codeword (730) is a representation of a set of multiple alpha modifiers for modifying an alpha value represented by the alpha codeword (720). The index sequence (740) includes an alpha index for each image element (610) in the block (600), where an alpha index identifies one of alpha modifiers in the alpha modifier set.

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ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Declarations under Rule 4.17:

- *as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii)) for the following designations AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA,*
- *ZM, ZW, ARIPO patent (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG)*
- *of inventorship (Rule 4.17(iv)) for US only*

Published:

- *with international search report*

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